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DEPT FOR EUR/SE AND OES/OA (JOHN FIELD)

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TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [KSCA](#) [PRL](#) [IWC](#) [ETRD](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: CYPRUS: WHALES - IWC MEMBERSHIP DEAMRCHE ON USG PRIORITIES

REF: STATE 56397

(U) This cable is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) Per reftel request, Post delivered on May 3 demarche on the 59th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in Alaska from May 28-31 to Alexandros Zenon, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We also sent copies to

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Panicos Poulos, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, and George Georgiou, Director, Department of Fisheries.

¶2. (SBU) Cyprus will be represented at the IWC meeting by Ms. Myrofora Hadjichristoforou, Senior Officer, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research. On May 8, Hadjichristoforou informed us that, generally, Cyprus was very pro-conservation on whaling issues and, thus, naturally inclined to side with the United States on most issues. The European Commission had recommended that all EU countries participating in the IWC come up with a common position on IWC agenda issues. Cyprus plans to honor whatever consensus position emerges from Brussels. Hadjichristoforou noted that the European Commission's Environment Directorate General (ENV) and Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Directorate General (FISH) were both vying for the leadership role on IWC issues. As part of a compromise, representatives from both DGs will attend the meeting.

¶3. (SBU) Regarding the GOC's position on the specific issues raised in our demarche, here are Hadjichristoforou's preliminary comments:

-- Bowhead Whale Quota: Being the IWC's newest member, Cyprus cannot take a position on this without consulting with the rest of the EU first. Cyprus would normally vote for absolute protection of whales. However, Cyprus would be willing to go along with the five year, 280 bowhead whale quota, provided the scientific community and the rest of the EU accepted the U.S. and Russian position that such limited subsistence whaling poses no threat to the species.

-- Revised Management Scheme (RMS): Cyprus has full confidence in the IWC's leadership that it will overcome the present impasse. Cyprus has no specific suggestions at this point.

-- Conservation Committee: Cyprus fully supports the U.S. position on this issue.

SCHLICHER